

DIVISION: FORMS 1 to 1V

AGE GROUP: 12 years and over

SERIES:

CURRENT AFFAIRS

PROGRAMME 5 "THE FESTIVAL OF GUYANA"

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Narrator: Hello Boys and Girls,

This week everybody has been talking about Guyana. We've all been thinking and talking about Guyana's future - and about what sort of constitution Guyana will have. You remember don't you that last week I told you what a constitution is. And with our leaders in London discussing a constitution part of our minds has been there with them.

But is this the only way that we've been talking and thinking about Guyana? No certainly not. Isn't it amazing children? At the same time that we've been thinking about Guyana's future, we've also been thinking about Guyana's past. You know what the past of a country is called, don't you? Yes, that's right - its past is called its History. And this week we've been celebrating History and Culture Week. Or as It's now called the Festival of Guyana.

OPR: MUSIC BREAK

NARR: Now why is it that we-all of us-should spend a whole week looking back into our past? Why should we spend a whole week talking about our way of life -for that's what the word "Culture" means? Well to answer that question I want you to imagine something. Suppose one morning you woke up and you couldn't remember anything about your past? Wouldn't you bother about it? Of course you would want to know how you came to be living in that house and that street. You would



want to know why you're going to the school you're in now; what you were like when you were much smaller. In fact you would be very curious about your past. Aren't you always asking your grandfathers and grandmothers to tell you stories of long ago? Of things that happened when they were children? Of course you do. Everybody wants to know what happened before he or she came along, and why things have turned out the way they are.

Well just as it is with you and me, so it is with whole nations. Nations are just as concerned to remember their past - what happened one hundred or two hundred years ago - as our ordinary people are to remember what happened last year or five years ago. And so in many countries and certainly in our own a time of the year is set aside to help everybody to remember what happened in the Nation's history and to get people to imagine what things must have been like in the years that have passed.

Have you noticed what strange names some places in Guyana have? Metermeerzorg, Vergernoegen, Vlissengen, Beterverwagting, La Penitence - these are only some of them but I'm sure you can make long lists of such names. Now when you think of names like those don't you want to say to your teachers "why do places in Guyana have such strange names." I should be very surprised if you haven't already been asking that question. You see, these names are sure to make you curious about the past. You want to know what they mean, what sort of people gave them those names; perhaps you may even want to know what the places were like when they first got those names. One question leads to another, and before you know it, you're busy finding out as much as you can about the history of your country. I want you to note boys and girls we don't only find out what happened but something that is equally important, how people lived and how they thought, and this makes it really interesting. Suppose you were to compare the way of life on an old Dutch plantation up the Berbice River with life on a modern sugar estate, this would be really interesting. And we want to imagine that we're sailing up the Essequibo on one of those early Dutch ships.